

SAFE OPERATING PROCEDURE

Learning and Teaching

1. Introduction

This document applies to Staff working in University Learning and Teaching (L&T) environments. Specific guidance and information on the measures in place at the University to prevent symptomatic and asymptomatic COVID transmission, is available on the [Health and Safety intranet page](#) and the [University Coronavirus information page](#).

The University is continuing to take a risk-based approach to minimise exposure and transmission of COVID 19, working closely with the regional Incident Management Team to implement necessary control measures to keep our community safe. As we transition through alert levels, the University will continue to respond to Welsh Government [latest requirements](#) and [Infection control framework for higher education](#)

All public, common and staff areas within the University, including, shared offices, corridors, foyers, reception areas, shops, lifts, stairways and conveniences operate with 2m social distancing arrangements in place.

2. Academic Staff responsibility

L&T Staff are required to ensure that they are aware of the reasonable measures in place at the university and that these are implemented during L&T activity and communicated to students and others affected.

Activity other than general face to face teaching should be risk assessed. The health and safety team can provide assistance with developing a specific risk assessment and further guidance is available for fieldwork and laboratory practical activity on the [H&S intranet page](#).

Student information has been developed on the COVID related risk and appropriate control measures at the University. This is available to all students on [MyUni hub](#). In addition students are required to sign the [student charter](#).

L&T staff are required to communicate specific requirements and control measures to students prior to the start of teaching activities.

Prior to returning to in person teaching, it is recommended that L&T staff familiarise themselves with buildings and L&T spaces, including the practical control measures in place as identified in this document.

3. Regular Lateral Flow Testing (LFT)

In accordance with the Welsh Government Guidance, the University encourages all staff and students to carry out regular [LFT Testing](#). The University guidance for LFT can be found on the [webpage](#).

4. Symptomatic individuals, Confirmed cases, Isolation and close contacts

All staff, students, tenants, contractors and visitors who are feeling unwell are required to stay at home and not come into campus. If you feel unwell whilst on campus you are required to go home immediately and get a [COVID test](#) by contacting the NHS 119 telephone line as part of the national test, trace and protect strategy. The University requirements for reporting symptomatic cases can be found on the [webpage](#)

Symptomatic individuals are required to follow the self isolation advice in the [Swansea University guidance](#) and [Self isolation information](#) on the Welsh Government website.

It is foreseeable that during the winter months, some staff and students will have symptoms such as a cough. This does not mean that they have COVID, however, these individuals are encouraged to get a [COVID test](#) in accordance with the Welsh Government guidance. Where the test is negative but the symptoms persist, the student is asked to inform [MyUni Support](#) and their lecturer. Where students have chronic conditions such as asthma that can cause symptoms likely to be mistaken for COVID, they are asked to inform MyUni Support and their lecturer.

Where a student is unwell during a lecture, the L&T staff member is entitled to ask them to leave the L&T space and to get a test in accordance with the Welsh Government guidance.

Do not come to campus if you test positive for COVID, even if you are asymptomatic. Staff are required to report to [HR](#) and their line manager, if they test positive for COVID and students are required to report confirmed cases to [MyUni Support](#) in accordance with the Swansea University [Reporting Confirmed COVID](#) cases document. The University has arrangements in place to support the test, trace and protect strategy.

4.1 Staff and students with Vulnerabilities and those at increased risk

The University has arrangements in place for staff and students who are at increased risk of COVID.

- **Staff:** The [Attending Campus checklist and Guidance](#) for employees is an individual employee health assessment that should be completed by colleagues who feel they may fall within the Government categories of Clinically Extremely Vulnerable, Clinically Vulnerable or consider that they are at increased risk from exposure to COVID-19.

Colleagues who live with someone who is Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable should contact their line manager or HR Business Partner who will discuss options available.

- **Students:** During enrolment, students are asked to inform MyUni Support if they are considered as Clinically Extremely Vulnerable or Clinically Vulnerable.

5. Preventing COVID Transmission in L&T Environments

The following paragraphs identify the University control measures in place for preventing COVID transmission in L&T environments, including PC labs.

Specific L&T activity other than general face to face teaching is to be risk assessed by the person responsible for the activity, this is usually the lecturer responsible for the activity.

One to one teaching, tutorials, mentoring and small group activity in offices or staff spaces will require a specific risk assessment by the person responsible for the activity. Consideration must be given to; the type and capacity of the space, social distancing, ventilation, cleaning and sanitising of the space, personal hand hygiene and sanitising. Considerations should also be given to other users of the space.

5.1 Room Capacity

A number of L&T spaces within the University will operate at reduced capacity. This information has been identified on the timetable and at the entrance to the room. Increasing capacity in these spaces is not permitted.

University staff are not part of the student group and whenever possible, are required to maintain social distancing of 2 metres.

Where it is not possible for staff to maintain 2 metre social distancing i.e. during clinical assessment activity, assessing work and assisting students, then specific risk assessment is to be carried out and appropriate control measures implemented.

The risk assessment must be documented, and further controls should include:

- Minimising the time spent within 2 metres of others.
- Avoid working face to face. Instead work side by side or back to back.
- Wearing face coverings.

As part of the reasonable measures for L&T spaces:

- Seating at the front of L&T spaces has been positioned/ removed to maintain 2m social distancing between staff and students.
- Please do not add any additional seats or furniture to any learning environments under any circumstances.

- Do not use furniture that is taped/ cordoned, or computer stations where the ISS team have disabled the keyboard and mouse. These computers will remain switched on and spaces will be used for remote dial in.
- L&T staff must inform timetabling of any room changes to enable the effective management of incidents and assist Test and Trace.

5.2 Face Coverings and PPE

Face coverings are not a type of personal protective equipment. The Welsh Government recommends that medical grade masks should be reserved for health and care workers. At the University, this may include medical, health and social care courses and activity where the risk assessment requires.

Please see Welsh Government guidance on face coverings for members of the public: [Face coverings: guidance for public | GOV.WALES](#)

5.2.1 What is the University position on wearing a face covering?

As a reasonable measure, face coverings **must be worn** in the following scenarios unless you are exempt;

- In all University areas accessible to the public including foyers, reception areas, corridors, lifts, stairways, conveniences, shops, libraries, theatres/cinemas.
- In all learning and teaching environments, including, teaching laboratories, clinical settings and workshops, where activity risk assessments permit.
- When moving around a space such as an open plan office or catering venue.
- When 2m social distancing cannot be maintained (unless it has been identified in a risk assessment that this would be unsafe).
- Where identified on a risk assessment as an appropriate control measure.
- When requested, where there are clinically extremely vulnerable students or staff or those who are at increased risk from COVID-19, including those who were previously shielding.

The University **strongly recommends** that you continue to wear a face covering in the following scenarios:

- When seated and 2m socially distanced in a multi occupancy office.
- When seated and 2m socially distanced in an examination.
- When staff are undertaking teaching activity and are 2m socially distanced, in a learning and teaching environment i.e. stood at a lectern or at the front of a class
- When 2m socially distanced in a research laboratory or workshop, where activity risk assessments permit.

Disposable face coverings should be provided in laboratories and workshops where chemicals or biological agents are handled. They should be disposed of in the lab after use.

5.2.2 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Respiratory Protective Equipment (RPE)

PPE and RPE may be required as per the activity risk assessment and take precedence over wearing a face covering. Compatibility of wearing a face covering with PPE/ RPE must be considered as part of the activity risk assessment.

5.2.3 Does everybody have to wear a face covering?

Some individuals may not be able to wear a face covering for medical reasons or a disability. In these instances, individuals may be anxious about being challenged for not wearing a face covering and are encouraged to wear a sunflower lanyard, carry an exemption card or [download a digital exemption](#) on to a mobile phone. Wearing/ carrying the [Hidden Disabilities Sunflower](#) discreetly indicates to people around you including staff, colleagues and health professionals that you have a hidden disability and you are unable to wear a face covering, that you may need additional support, help or more time.

The use of face coverings will increase communication difficulty for many people, especially those that are Deaf/ deaf or hearing impaired or those who rely on lip reading or facial expression to communicate. You may be asked by any student or colleague to remove your face covering, or you may ask a student or colleague to remove their face covering to assist with communication. If this is the case, remove your face covering temporarily, ensuring that you maintain 2 metre distance and are in a well-ventilated area.

Staff are requested to inform their line manager and students are requested to inform the Disability Office and MyUni Support if they are Deaf/ deaf, hearing impaired or rely on lip reading or facial expression to communicate and require appropriate support. Individual communication needs will be identified, and appropriate measures implemented to support communication.

It is important to check individual communication needs with the people you are talking to and be mindful of different strategies for communicating in general.

6. Ventilation, CO2 monitors and Thermal discomfort

Good Ventilation is a key control in reducing the risk of COVID transmission. A range of methods are in place to measure and [improve ventilation](#) at the university and this includes the provision of CO2 monitors in some spaces.

Estates and Facilities Management – Technical Services team have reviewed the ventilation systems in buildings across the estate and changes have been implemented based on the recommendations of guidance documentation from various technical professional bodies. Details of actions taken have been communicated to Faculty operational teams. Where concerns about ventilation and fresh air supply in rooms have been highlighted, in a small number of cases 'do not use' advice has been given.

Specifically, the following Guiding principles have been adopted;

- Secure ventilation of spaces with outdoor air.

- Switch ventilation to nominal speed at least 2 hours before the building usage time and switch to lower speed 2 hours after the building usage time.
- At nights and weekends, do not switch ventilation off but keep running at lower speed.
- Switch air handling units with recirculation to 100% outdoor air.
- Inspect heat recovery equipment to be sure that leakages are under control.
- Switch fan coils either off or increase the duration of operation where they are remotely controlled by our Building Management System.
- Fan coil units and air conditioning units sprayed with a biocide cleaner including the filters.
- Fan coil units and air conditioning units have had biocide tablets inserted in the condensate trays.
- Ensure regular airing with windows where possible (even in mechanically vented buildings).
- Keep toilet ventilation 24/7 in operation.
- Avoid open windows in toilets to assure the right direction of ventilation.
- Instruct building occupants to flush toilets with closed lid where possible.
- Do not change heating, cooling and possible humidification set points.
- Do not plan duct cleaning for this period.
- Replace central outdoor air and extract filters as usual, according to maintenance schedules (we have also upgraded the specification of our replacement filters).
- Regular filter replacement and maintenance works shall be performed with common protective measures including respiratory protection.

6.1 CO2 Monitoring

In accordance with a Welsh Government initiative, CO2 monitors have been placed in over 200 L&T spaces. CO2 monitors can provide a guide to the adequacy of ventilation within a space and help identify poorly ventilated areas. People exhale carbon dioxide (CO2) when they breathe out. If there is a build-up of CO2 in an area, it can indicate ventilation needs improving.

CO2 levels are not a direct measure of possible exposure to COVID-19, but the use of CO2 monitors can help identify poorly ventilated areas.

The two main types of monitoring devices used at the university are:

- Fixed wall or ceiling mounted monitors, linked to the Universities Building Management System. These provide real time remote monitoring by the Technical Services team
- Portable (image below), non-dispersive infrared (NDIR) CO2 monitors which will be placed in designated locations. These readings can only be taken at point of use.



Measurements must be considered over a defined period, to give a holistic representation of ventilation levels in the space. Results taken at a snapshot in time, can be misleading.

Do not interfere with the monitors in any way, by moving them, altering settings, or breathing closely on the devices as this can lead to misleading results.

Raised CO2 levels are not a direct measure of possible exposure to COVID-19.

The installation and calibration of CO2 monitors must only be carried out by E&FM. This is to ensure a consistent approach, where they are placed in identified, risk assessed locations and the readings are interpreted accurately.

Below is a list of CO2 measurements and guidance on how the spaces can be managed in line with those readings.

CO2 reading in parts per million (ppm)	Action required
400ppm or below (Green indicator on NDIR monitor)	Report to estatesadmin@swansea.ac.uk using the template provided below. This is more representative of outdoor areas. The monitor may be faulty or in the wrong location. Monitor to be relocated by E&FM to review readings.
400-800ppm (Green indicator on NDIR monitor)	Space is likely well ventilated. No further action required. Continue to monitor readings for any significant changes.
800ppm-1500ppm (Amber indicator on NDIR monitor)	Elevated levels of CO2 in the space. This is not a cause to vacate or stop activity. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open doors (not fire doors) and / or windows where possible Continue to monitor levels as the session progresses, to check for significant changes.
1500ppm and above (Red indicator on NDIR monitor)	If these readings are noted at the beginning of a session or remain consistent over a 15-minute period, take the following action: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Open doors (not fire doors) and windows that are not already open Reduce the room capacity / vacate the room for 15 minutes or so the CO2 levels drop back to below 1500ppm Consider the activity – is it contributing to the increased CO2 i.e. exercise, shouting, singing and aerosol generating activities

Please report any consistently high amber or red readings to estatesadmin@swansea.ac.uk using the template below.

CO2 Monitor Asset number	CO2 Monitor reading (PPM)	Building	Room Number	Time of day	Number of people in the space

This data will be monitored and will help guide how the spaces can be managed, to enable safe levels of occupancy and timetabling.

Faculty/ L&T staff are required to comply with the following:

- Report concerns with ventilation to their Faculty and inform H&S and E&FM team for specific risk assessment to be completed.
- To read and understand the H&S information sheet on [ventilation](#). And CO2 monitors
- Do not alter the settings on ventilation systems.
- Ensure natural ventilation by opening windows and internal doors (unless fire doors) to enable the flow of natural ventilation and avoid pockets of stagnant air in rooms. Contact the H&S team for advice when planning to prop open doors.
- Monitor the CO2 monitors during sessions and take action as outlined in the action cards provided. If students are required to vacate the room, avoid gathering in common spaces such as corridors and foyers. Students should be asked to leave the area and return at the agreed time.

6.2 Thermal discomfort

It is foreseeable that individuals will experience a degree of thermal discomfort because of increased natural ventilation. This is a balance of risk between minimising COVID transmission and individuals feeling cold.

Staff and students are advised that teaching and learning spaces may be colder than usual and suitable clothing should be worn.

If thermal discomfort is excessive, report to the [H&S team](#) and the [E&FM help desk](#). Reports of thermal discomfort will be managed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with legislative compliance and risk assessment.

7. Access/ Egress to L&T Spaces

Where possible, L&T spaces will be open all day to enable staff and students to enter the room and avoid queuing in corridors. It will be the responsibility of all University staff to continue to manage corridor and common spaces. Staff should maintain social distancing from others when entering and leaving the space.

- Staff should avoid moving around the space and maintain social distancing. Where this is not possible, then specific activity risk assessment should be completed. See information above on social distancing.
- Students should avoid moving around the space and should sit in allocated seating.
- Remind students to arrive promptly at sessions and to avoid gathering/ queuing in corridors or elsewhere in the building. The timetable has been structured to minimise congestion in common areas.
- Staff and students are required to sanitise hands when entering and leaving the L&T space and use the sanitising equipment provided to wipe their immediate space and any shared equipment before use. See further information on cleaning and sanitising below.

8. Cleaning and Sanitising

The University enhanced cleaning and sanitising arrangements remain in place and details can be found in the [Cleaning and Sanitising risk assessment](#).

In addition to cleaning by the Campus Services team, the following arrangements are in place:

- Sanitising wipes (Sanisafe 3) will be available in all (non-specialist) L&T environments.
- The sanitising wipe dispenser buckets are fixed to the surface so please do not attempt to remove.
- The sanitising wipes will be frequently checked and replenished. Please advise the E&FM Helpdesk of any supply issues.
- Staff and students are required to wipe their immediate space and any shared equipment before use. Time should be allocated to this activity at the start and end of the session. The following process is recommended;
 - Collect a wipe from the wipe bucket/ dispenser when entering the room and proceed to workspace/ seating area.
 - Wipe the lectern/ IT screen/ remote controls/ computer equipment / microphones with a Sanisafe 3 wipe (do not use other types of wipes on the IT equipment).
 - Wipe your desk and other hard surfaces such as chair arms with a sanitiser wipe.
 - Dispose of the wipes in the bins provided. See Waste Guidance notes for detail.
 - Sanitise hands after wiping the equipment.

Please refer to the [E&FM intranet page](#); for the live document identifying the sanitising solution in place for each L&T space. Please contact the E&FM Helpdesk for queries and/ or updates to the list.

9. Maintaining Attendance Registers and Test and Trace

The University has arrangements in place for test, trace and protect in line with Public Health Wales and Local Health Board guidance. The University supports the Government UK wide digital app with QR code posters displayed in some locations.

In addition to the Government app, and to assist with test and trace, all staff and students are required to use the Salto system in all campus spaces and to sign into L&T spaces via the existing TDS points. Staff and Students are also strongly encouraged to check in to the SafeZone app when attending campus.

10. The Use of Shared Equipment

Avoid sharing equipment if possible. Identify new ways of working such as demonstrating practical activity and the use of large screens. Where sharing equipment is required then the contamination and transmission risks are to be considered and controlled in the activity risk assessment. Always maintain good hand hygiene in accordance with the University guidance when handling shared equipment, issuing hand outs and collecting student work. Examples of sharing equipment are available below;

Sharing IT and AV equipment: See the AV support RA for teaching spaces and safe operating procedures for recording booths. Where possible ceiling microphones have been installed and equipment such as goose neck microphones have been fitted with plastic shields.

Sharing equipment such as, apparatus, tools, books, calculators and issuing handouts/paperwork etc.: All shared equipment should be cleaned before and after use by the user, using the sanitising equipment provided by the University. Remind students of this requirement as part of the activity.

The sharing of stationery such as pens, pencils and note paper is not advised. Students are encouraged to bring all stationery required for lectures with them. Faculties may wish to have a supply of pens, pencils and notepaper that they can issue to those individuals forgetting to bring their own.

Minimise the frequency of sharing and the numbers of people sharing at a time. For example;

- Where possible staff to avoid collecting in hand outs and request student work is submitted electronically.
- Purchasing additional equipment.
- Providing electronic books and handouts.
- Allocate equipment to one individual for the duration of the session.
- Develop arrangements for collection of equipment / handouts to minimise handling and cross contamination i.e. cleaning and sanitising before and after handling, use of a collection box and quarantine period as required
- Clean equipment before re-issue using the sanitising equipment provided.

Arrangements for using and cleaning shared equipment must consider the use of PPE and disposal of waste.

11. Reporting Non-compliance

All student non-compliance with the University requirements should be reported to [MyUni Support team](#). Students have been informed of the expectation to always comply with University requirements, including when not accompanied by lecturing staff i.e. when staff are teaching in cluster rooms.

12. Emergency Situations

12.1 Fire

L&T staff play a key role during the evacuation of a building, as they control students who will generally be un-familiar with evacuation routes and require a prompt to start the evacuation process.

In the event of a fire alarm activation, staff and students should evacuate the building through nearest safe exit.

- One-way systems and social distancing do not have to be adhered to in an emergency.
- Once outside and a safe distance away from the building staff/ students should gather near but not congregate at the muster point.

All Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans will be completed in line with the current processes.

L&T staff are actively encouraged to become fire wardens. Training can be delivered by Zoom and takes approximately one hour and fifteen minutes to deliver. The training includes information relating to people with disabilities who may require assistance to evacuate a building should a fire alarm activation occur. For further information on how to become a fire warden contact the [H&S team](#).

12.2 First aid

Arrangements are in place for the provision of first aid and first aiders are aware of additional COVID control measures. For more information see the [first aid information sheet](#).

- All staff should be aware of the first aid provision in their Faculty.
- In the event of an emergency contact security (333 from a landline), use the SafeZone app or 999 for the emergency services.

13. Provision of Information and Communication

Updates to guidance and risk levels will be communicated via the SLT communications and COVID round-up and posted on the [H&S and COVID webpages](#).